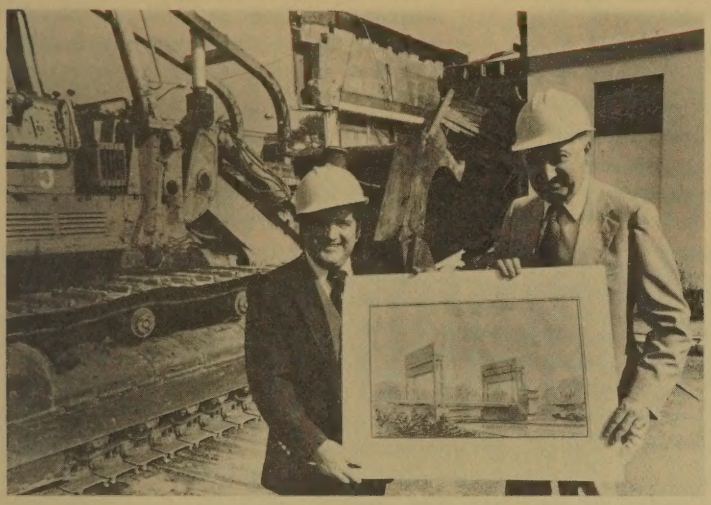
MOBILITY

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BRENDAN BYRNE, Governor | DECEMBER 1980 | LOUIS J. GAMBACCINI, Commissioner



One project begins...

Point Pleasant Mayor Peter A. Marone and Commissioner Louis J. Gambaccini hold artist's rendition of new Route 88 Bridge over the Inland waterway in Point Pleasant. Behind them is the vacated gas station which was demolished at an unusual ceremony in October which marked the beginning of the first phase of construction.

The new four-lane vertical lift bridge will be located about 100 feet south of the present bridge and includes two six foot sidewalks. At 30 feet above the mean high water mark when closed, it is expected to reduce the number of bridge openings by about 80 percent. Other related road and intersection improvements also will take place in the area.

U.S. Senator Bill Bradley and Congressman James J. Howard were among the officials present at the ceremony.

And another ends

The last 3.6 mile link of Interstate Route 280, the third interstate to be fully constructed through New Jersey, was celebrated at ceremonies conducted by Governor Brendan Byrne and Commissioner Louis J. Gambaccini with local, county, state and transportation officials. Almost 2,000 people attended.

The completed section, between the Stickel Bridge and the New Jersey Turnpike (Interstate Route 95) in Harrison and Kearney, now enables traffic to go directly from Hudson County through central Essex County to Interstate Route 80 in Parsippany-Troy Hills, thus significantly reducing traffic on many local roads.

The construction of the $45 million 18-mile-long interstate was marked by complicated environmental and engineering problems.

'Easy Street' opens on Garden State Parkway

The first high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane in New Jersey, dubbed "Easy Street," officially opened November 17. DOT Commissioner Louis J. Gambaccini and numerous state, local and corporate officials rode the length of the state-owned, 12-mile stretch from the New Jersey Turnpike in Woodbridge to Route 22 in Union to watch the lane at work.

During rush hours — 7 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 6 p.m. weekdays — the lanes are reserved for the exclusive use of HOVs carrying three or more people. These are believed to be the longest HOV lanes in the country.

The Parkway HOV program has the strong support of the Departments of Energy and Environmental Protection. The program is expected to save 750,000 gallons of gasoline annually and reduce air pollution in the area. In addition, experience elsewhere in the country — New York, Florida, Oregon, California, Virginia and Hawaii — has shown that car and vanpoolers using an HOV lane enjoy faster travel times while avoiding the stop-and-go congestion which plagues rush hours on superhighways like the Parkway.

During the trip along "Easy Street," Commissioner Gambaccini noted that the DOT estimates that this portion of the Parkway will reach maximum capacity by the mid-80s if the present trend to one-passenger vehicles continues. "HOV programs ease traffic congestion for all drivers, even those who cannot carpool, by reducing the number of vehicles on a roadway," he said.

With the opening of "Easy Street," DOT's Office of Ridesharing intensified its efforts to promote car and van pooling, especially among employees of the companies within a 22-mile radius of the HOV lane. In addition to holding on-site conferences with ridesharing coordinators at each organization, DOT has set up a toll-free number, 800-242-0855, to handle inquiries about the HOV lane in particular and ridesharing in general.

Ridesharing catches on in New Jersey

Ridesharing is catching on in New Jersey, conserving fuel and reducing air pollution and traffic congestion, according to the latest figures released by the Department's Office of Ridesharing.

"U.S. Department of Energy estimates

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X-ray equipment is used for sign safety

X-ray equipment is usually associated with doctors and hospitals. However, DOT engineers are using x-rays in a unique way. Their "patients" are 19 foot overhead sign units, and the x-rays are used to detect faulty welds which could fail and shorten the life of the structure.

The tests are being conducted by staff from the Bureau of Plant and Project Inspection. "X-ray testing or radiography is one of several non-destructive tests we perform to insure the quality of the aluminum sign structures," said Henry G. Justus, project manager.

Five assistant engineers have received training at Kodak's School of Industrial Radiography in Rochester. They travel to manufacturing plants from Illinois to Alabama and perform radiographic inspections on sign structures as they are completed.

Operating in two-man teams, the inspectors x-ray 25 percent of the welded joints in each structure. The exposed films are developed in a portable dark room housed in a camper. If the quality of the workmanship proves to be below DOT specifications, the manufacturer is required to correct the errors. On the spot inspections have saved both time and money.

In a further use of radiography, inspectors recently completed a detailed examination of a "box-truss" sign structure removed from Route I-295 in service since 1971. "Studying the films will help correlate the relationship between weld quality, design criteria and fabrication specifications," said structural design engineer Ted Kiselewicz.

Rail stations leased

The leasing of the railroad stations in Ramsey and Park Ridge to those municipalities has been approved by the Board of Directors of NJ TRANSIT, under the terms of its station leasing policy.

Both stations also are scheduled for renovation next year in the rail station deferred maintenance program which is already underway.

I-895 dollars tagged for better roads, public transit

Governor Brendan Byrne has announced that the U.S Department of Transportation has approved the dedesignation of Interstate 895. This will allow the $140.7 million, previously allocated to construction of the highway, to be applied to other road and public transit projects in Burlington, Camden and Gloucester counties, including construction of the PATCO High Speed Line to Berlin and improvements to Route 541.

The action, which was requested by the Governor, officially removes the proposed 4.3 mile stretch of highway from the national Interstate Highway System. Pennsylvania's concurrent request for dedesignation of the 2.1 mile adjoining section of I-895 was also approved.

"This is a significant step in our overall interstate effort to seek transfer of funds from projects not deemed essential to the system, while moving ahead with completion of essential missing interstate links — 287, 78 and 195/295," said the Governor.

This is the second New Jersey interstate transfer to be approved. Last year, I-495 in Hudson County was dedesignated, shifting $54 million to other regional projects, $15 million of which has already been authorized for road and public transit projects. Dedesignation of I-95 and I-695 in Somerset, Mercer and Middlesex Counties is also planned, and substitute regional projects are now being developed with affected communities.

In requesting dedesignation of I-895, the Governor submitted a list of ten substitute road and public transit projects, developed by the DOT and local officials in Burlington, Camden and Gloucester Counties. These projects are now eligible for federal interstate transfer funds, as they are appropriated annually by Congress. Interstate transfer funds provide 85% of the project cost, while regular interstate funds provide 90% of project cost.

The I-895 substitute projects are supported by the Burlington Township Council and the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission.

Ridesharing catches on in New Jersey

Continued from page 1

indicate that New Jersey is the leading ridesharing state in the nation on the basis of the number of employee-sponsored programs," reports Robert M. Atkins, NJDOT's Office of Ridesharing director. "We are involved in van and car pools, public transportation, park and ride facilities, and shuttle services."

NJDOT statistics indicate that almost a half million of New Jersey's regular commuters carpool, while 76,000 vanpool and 42,000 use mass transit to sites within the state and 350,000 use mass transit to out-of-state work sites.

"There are 1,500 employer-sponsored carpools with approximately 15,000 commuters and 6,000 independent vanpools with approximately 39,000 riders," says Atkins. "Two-thirds of the larger employers in New Jersey have carpool programs. This has helped reduce fuel consumption by 20 percent over a year ago in New Jersey. The national average is an eight percent reduction," he adds.

New Jersey-based corporations with the largest company-sponsored ridesharing programs are Prudential, Bell Laboratories, A.T. & T., Dupont, Johnson and Johnson and Hoffman LaRoche. Prudential has 150 vans in its fleet and has a huge and expanding carpool program numbering 2,575 employees or 27% of its New Jersey work force.

An increasing number of corporations are contacting my office prior to relocating in New Jersey from out of state, as well as companies that are moving or expanding within New Jersey," states Atkins.

The Office of Ridesharing also is holding a series of training seminars for ridesharing coordinators from the three operating casinos in Atlantic City and will hold workshops for the seven casinos-hotels that are under construction. Vanpool services will be offered to casino employees in 1981.

Over 22 percent of the State of New Jersey employees in the Trenton area also are involved in ridesharing, saving over $11 million per year in fuel.

NJDOT's Ridesharing Office offers employers a computer matching program to assist in forming employee carpools, training seminars for ridesharing coordinators, consulting and other services.

For further information, contact the Office of Ridesharing, Department of Transportation, 1035 Parkway Avenue, Trenton, NJ or call 609-292-4934.

MOBILITY is a quarterly publication of the New Jersey Department of Transportation, Office of Public Affairs, to inform the general public about the Department and its activities. If you want to be on the mailing list, write to MOBILITY, Bureau of Publications, New Jersey Department of Transportation, 1035 Parkway Ave., Box 101, Trenton, N.J. 08625.

Vol. 2 No. 4 December 1980

Commissioner states fiscal needs to 1988

Commissioner Louis J. Gambaccini outlined structural repairs and construction needs for highways, bridges, local roads, public transit systems, and aviation facilities totalling $4.3 billion over the next seven years.

In a late October presentation before the State Commission on Capital Budgeting and Planning, the Commissioner said that the 1979 Bond Issue funds and federal funds would pay for only about 70% of the cost, requiring state budget funds of $1.2 billion from fiscal 1982-1988 to cover the balance. But he emphasized that without the necessary state budget funds, significant federal funds would not be available to New Jersey because they require matching funds.

"The 1979 Bond Issue was proposed and approved as a four-year, stop-gap effort to provide for only the most urgent work from a massive backog - and that's all it will do," said the Commissioner.

"The longer we wait to dig into the rest of the backlog, the more it will cost in dollars, efficiency loss, increased travel time and energy waste. We have more vehicles per mile of road than any other state and a relatively large number of transit users, so our system takes a constant beating.

Every year, projects in the repair and rehabilitation category slip into the replacement category because of lack of funds. At the same time, public demand for transportation improvements continues to increase. We must have adequate stable funding to meet that demand."

He noted that this year DOT received $450 million worth of county and municipal road applications for state aid Bond Issue funds that total $48 million.

New DOT office eyes the future of cities

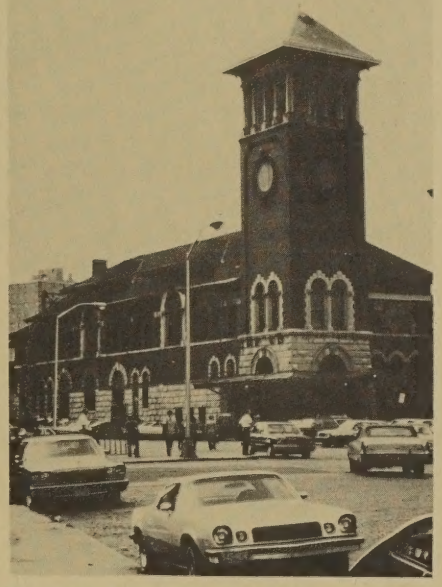
Commissioner Louis J. Gambaccini has announced the creation of the Office of Joint Development/Urban Initiatives (JD/UI) within the Division of Transportation Planning and Research.

Joseph Walsh-Russo was named Director. His staff is located on the third floor of the Headquarters Annex in Trenton, (SCAN 8-324-0864; 609-984-0864)

With DOT for nearly two years, Walsh-Russo holds a master's degree in City Planning from New York University. He was Director of Passaic County's Transportation Board and, before that, worked in the City of Rochester (N.Y.) Housing and Redevelopment Agency and on the Monroe County (N.Y.) Planning Board.

Joint development is described as the integration of real estate development with transportation, recognizing that transportation itself is a land use which is key to orderly, energy-efficient — and successful — growth and development.

The Department's new office will play a highly visible role in promoting and coordinating public and private investments at vital transit stations and highway locations. Its main objective is to plan new commercial, residential and industrial ventures in urban areas around public transit facilities, multi-modal transfer sites, transit malls and highways.



Newark's Broad Street Station is the focus of one of the new office's projects.

Working with local communities and NJ TRANSIT, DOT's new JD/UI office will initiate joint development projects. A statewide survey completed in February by a consultant identified rail and transit station areas which have the best potential for joint development.

There are 13 joint development/urban initiatives projects currently in the planning or design stage in New Jersey: Hoboken Terminal; Broad Street and Penn Stations, Newark; Trenton, Princeton Junction, Plainfield (Transit Mall), Paterson, Asbury Park, New Brunswick, Hackensack, Elizabeth, Jersey City and Metuchen.

Planning is based on a station area master plan approach which protects present commuters and provides for the increased traffic and trips which new development generates.

The planning of four projects is well advanced. The JD/UI office was the catalyst in forming Renaissance Newark, Inc., a non-profit station development corporation which will guide joint development at the Newark's Penn and Broad Street Stations.

Air emergency exercise conducted

The Department's Division of Aeronautics conducted a state and Regional Disaster Airlift Exercise, called "SARDA EIGHTY '1'," on November 1, in Morris Plains, Morris County, to evaluate state emergency air transportation control and support capability in the event of a large scale disaster.

The simulated disaster involves a large tanker truck in a traffic accident that overturns, leaks a volatile liquid, catches fire and then explodes.

The exercise took place in the Warner Lambert Company parking lot. Over 75 rescue flights are scheduled into the area.

The Federal Aviation Administration, New Jersey Civil Air Patrol, National Burn Victim Foundation and State Police coordinated the exercise with NJDOT.

Directing the exercise was Walter D. Kies, State Director of Aeronautics, who provided instruction and assigned flight missions from the State Police Emergency Operating Center in West Trenton.

The Morristown Municipal, Lincoln Park and Flanders Valley Airports took part in the simulated disaster recovery efforts. The Civil Air Patrol - New Jersey Wing established communications bases to these airports and at Warner Lambert and the exercise site.

The Civil Air Patrol and volunteer pilots and aircraft airlifted key personnel and supplies during the operation.

Skyway opens

All four lanes of the Pulaski Skyway opened to traffic on November 14 for the first time since March 1979 when the $11 million safety and resurfacing project began. The age and size of the 48-year-old bridge, whose 3½ mile span extends from JFK Boulevard in Jersey City to the U.S. 1-9 Truck Route in Newark over the Passaic and Hudson Rivers, and its heavy traffic volume, added to the complexity of the task.

CEMM system is adopted

NJDOT was the first and only transportation department in the Northeast to receive a $52,000 grant in early 1980, seed money from the Federal Highway Administration to put into effect a new manpower management system in the construction and materials areas.

At just about half time in this task, it looks as if the new system of matching people and skill levels to the work at hand is well underway.

"The Construction Engineering Manpower Management System (CEMM) is now in practice statewide on 25 active DOT construction projects. It will be used from now on to project engineering and inspection personnel needs for construction projects and to monitor their manhours," said Chief Engineer Milton Greitzer.

What is CEMM all about? Several years ago, funded with money pooled by 22 states, FHWA hired the consulting firm Roy Jorgensen Associates, to come up with a manpower deployment system. This was in response to a critical problem experienced by DOTs nationwide: how to make the transition of people and materials from the major interstate construction projects which were winding down to the repair and improvement projects and fiscal cutbacks which had become the rule rather than the exception.

Working with the CEMM staff were members of the Department experienced in construction and materials.

A compatible system now is being developed for the dispersement of construction materials.

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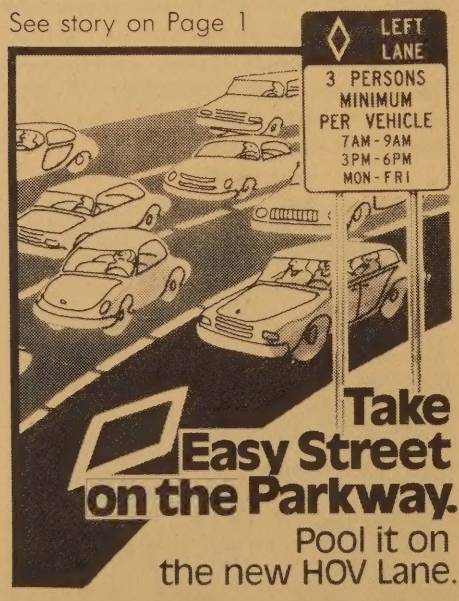

Rt. 18 freeway to get unique deck park

DOT has awarded a $27.4 million contract to Schiavone Construction Company of Secaucus to build a one-mile missing link of the Route 18 Freeway and unique deck park in New Brunswick.

The Freeway, considered to be an important element in the revitalization of New Brunswick, will extend from River Road in Piscataway to the Garden State Parkway in Tinton Falls when the project is completed.

The four-lane highway with acceleration and deceleration lanes, center barriers, landscaping and a deck park over the highway behind the Rutgers University dormitories and an adjoining parkway are scheduled to be finished by Fall 1983.

The deck park will be 1,600 feet long and 120 feet wide with access from George Street and the bikeway. It will have three tennis courts, two basketball courts, a handball court, picnic pavilions, shelters, a stage, game tables and drinking fountains. Trees and shrubs will be set in raised planters and turf areas.

The bikeway will provide interconnection with the deck park, Boyd Park, Buccleuch Park and the bikeway over the Raritan River Bridge to Johnson Park.

Railroad crossings are upgraded

Under a multi-million dollar Federal Railroad Highway Crossing Safety Program, the Department is rehabilitating grade crossings throughout New Jersey. It expects to complete approximately 60 crossings this year.

The program consists of contructing new grade crossings with the necessary approach work to provide a smoother ride over the tracks.

Railroad grade crossing public hearings are conducted to determine if protective devices such as gates, flashing lights, bells and crossbucks should be installed or refurbished, along with highway advance warning signs and pavement markings.

The three railroad crossing surfaces used in New Jersey are rubber, structural foam (plastic) and bituminous pavement with metal guard rails (flangeways). Crossings are investigated by the Department on an individual basis to determine which surface is warranted. The approximate cost per linear foot are rubber, $1,000; structural foam, $700 and bituminous, $400.

The program is funded 90 percent by the federal government with 1973 Highway Safety Act funds and 10 percent by the state.

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Traffic circle contest clarification

The last edition of *Mobility* carried an announcement of the Department's contest for design improvements for the state's traffic circles. It failed to make clear that while the contest is using the Ellisburg Circle in Camden County and the Eatontown Circle in Monmouth County, two of the state's most congested circles, as models, award winning designs will be applied to traffic circles statewide.

The nationwide contest is open to persons with a background in traffic/highway engineering. A letter of interest, briefly outlining qualifications, must be submitted to NJDOT, Circle Design Competition, 1035 Parkway Avenue, Room 156, Trenton, NJ 08625. Contest deadline is December 31.